

James Cleveland and George Washington, January 10, 1775, Contract and Instructions, The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR JAMES CLEVELAND

January 10, 1775.

As I am resolved, if no unforeseen accident happens to prevent it, to have my people at work upon my lands on the Ohio, by the last day of March, no steps previous to this undertaking should be delayed, by which a disappointment must follow. I, therefore, knowing it will take some time to collect provisions, and tools to carry on this work, and that the transportation of them in the spring early over the Allegany Mountains may be attended with difficulty and uncertainty, do request and require you to go immediately over to Gilbert Simpson's in the Redstone settlement, and there do, or attempt to do, the following things:—

First. Engage anywhere between one hundred and fifty and two hundred bushels of Indian corn, and to prevent disappointments, let it be actually lodged at Gilbert Simpson's before the first day of March. Also engage upon the best terms you can to be delivered as aforesaid, about fifteen hundredweight of bacon; and desire Mr. Simpson by all means to have them securely lodged for you at his house by that time at furthest.

Second. Engage upon the best terms you can, such, and so many canoes, as are absolutely necessary to transport your provisions and tools down the river. And to avoid the expence of bags as much as possible, try if one of the canoes cannot be fitted up in such a manner as to carry your corn and bacon with the assistance of one or two only.

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Perhaps the canoes built for me last year may again be got. Speak to Major Crawford on this head.

Third. If Mr. Simpson has not already moved all the tools and necessities which were carried out for me last spring, from Val. Crawford's, let it be done as soon as you get out. Here with is a list of what he acknowledges he had left upon hand in September last, as also of what he carried out. Take an exact account of everything you find and have them secured at Mr. Simpson's ready at your departure down the river. After which see what things you will want for your undertaking down the river, and then

Fourth. Try if they are to be had out there, at what prices, and if you find the only difference to lie in the expence of the carriage out, endeavor to buy every thing you can want there, rather than run the hazard of sending them from hence in March, and have them lodged as above; for if you do not get every thing into his possession, you may more than probable depend upon promises, and be disappointed after your men are assembled and ready to start, which must occasion a delay, and of course a loss to me, not only of time, but in having men upon expences.

Fifth. It may not be amiss to engage potatoe seed, Pease, and such things, as will not only contribute to your better living, but will, in case corn should be found very scarce and difficult to be got make the less of it necessary; for I do expect that from the breaking up of the plantations last year, and the great number of people that will be going over this, that corn will be very scarce and exceeding dear. If you could get peach, or any other kind of fruit stones, or apple seeds, it would not be amiss to engage them to carry out with you.

Sixth. Inasmuch as both time and expences will be saved by engaging men in the Redstone settlement to go with you down the river, I would have you make diligent enquiry whether they are to be had, and upon what terms, and engage at least five upon the best terms you can, and have them bound in the articles given you. If you should meet with such people as you think will answer the purpose, in your own neighborhood or elsewhere,

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you might engage them, provided you can depend upon their going at the proper time and will transport themselves without any expence to me.

Seventh. If you can hire negro fellows, or choose to carry any of your own, upon the terms I mentioned to you, there will not in that case be occasion to hire so many white men as above (to wit, five). And as I am told that there are three of the servants which I sent out last spring still at Mr. Val. Crawford's and his brother, Captain Crawford's, ready to be employed in my service; you may direct them to stay where they are, and be ready again the 15th of March; or if Gilbert Simpson wants hands for my mill work, let them be employed (instead of hirelings) there, till the 15th of March aforesaid.

Eight. As the rest of the servants were sold, and the money by this time become due, I have desired Mr. Val. Crawford, if he has received it, to pay it to you; and if he has not, to let you have the purchaser's bonds, which give to Mr. Simpson, and desire him to collect the money and apply it towards payment of the mill accounts. If you can get corn, or other provisions, tools, or other things of Val. Crawford, I would have you do it, as it will save me the payment of cash; but be sure to have the matter fixed in such a manner with him as to run no risque of a disappointment.

You may get corn and other things from Captain Crawford, in like manner; but that you may not depend too much upon these uncertain chances, I now furnish you with £60, Pennsylvania money, and whatever it falls short of the amount of your purchases I will supply when you go out again, that everybody may be paid for what you get of them.

As I must set off for the Assembly by the first of February, and shall want to see you before I go, I would have you endeavor [if] it can conveniently be done, to be down here by that time. I have nothing more to add at present than to wish you success in your journey, and am &c.¹

¹these instructions, in an unidentified hand, are signed by Washington. Cleveland, because of illness, was obliged to relinquish control of the expedition in favor of William Stevens; but he took charge again in April, 1775. The articles of agreement, dated Jan. 10, 1775, between Washington and Cleveland, who was from Loudoun County,

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Va., are in the Washington Papers. By them the business was to be conducted by Cleveland until Dec. 10, 1775, and he was to be paid £100 Virginia currency.